

# Fact Sheet



U.S. Department of Labor  
Office of Public Affairs  
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## **DOL Releases Guidance Clarifying the Effect of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act on Faith Based Organizations**

The U.S. Department of Labor today announced guidance to clarify the conditions under which the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) of 1993 allows recipients of DOL financial assistance to maintain their ability to make employment decisions based on religion even when receiving a federal grant under a program whose statute limits those rights.

This guidance, which implements a recent opinion concerning the proper construction of RFRA provided by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), creates a formal process for recipients of DOL financial assistance to seek an exemption under RFRA.

RFRA, as interpreted by DOJ and as implemented by this guidance, ensures that faith based organizations are able to participate as partners in federal programs to help meet the needs of America's communities and retain the freedom to make employment decisions necessary to preserve their religious identity. The guidance, thus, helps level the playing field for faith-based organizations by enabling them to hire like-minded individuals, just as secular organizations are currently able to do.

### **FAST FACTS:**

- Innovative public-private partnerships between the Department of Labor and faith-based and community organizations have helped approximately **150,000** jobseekers, workers, families, vulnerable youth and communities.
- Through programs funded by DOL, faith-based organizations have helped **homeless veterans** find housing and jobs, decreased unemployment and recidivism among **ex-prisoners**, increased workplace safety outreach to **non-English speaking workers**, and expanded employment resources in **low-income communities**.
- **Thousands** of faith-based organizations may be unaware of their ability to seek an exemption under RFRA when applying for grants in the absence of the Department's guidance.

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